

Not in Tremaine
Not in Dismac
Not in Payson

APPEAL

*To the people of Canada, to those of the Mother-country, and
to the Generous Hearted of every Land.*

Twenty-one years ago two conflagrations, separated from each other by an interval of but thirty days, reduced to ashes almost two-thirds of our city, and threw naked, on the smoking highway, upwards of 20,000 human beings. At sight of so much suffering the whole civilized world was moved to profound compassion, and abundant contributions flowed in from all sides to the succour of such heart-rending misfortune. Canada subscribed liberally; the Mother-country was superabundant in her gifts; and foreign nations were not behindhand in sympathy and generosity. Our agricultural population, though impoverished by adverse seasons, was moved to compassion, and contributed all that it could in money, but more especially in produce. We were then at the beginning of summer, and at the sight of the brilliant sun overhead, promising opportunity and reward to industry and toil, and of such universally expressed sympathy, hope and courage took possession of the hearts of so many thousands struck by misfortune. Soon the subscriptions poured in so abundantly that the Relief Committee, appointed by the citizens, was enabled, to a certain degree, to aid them in rebuilding; and this assistance was given on the condition that nothing but incombustible materials should be employed in the reconstruction of their homes. Thus it was that nearly 8,000 wooden houses were replaced by as many in stone and brick, and saved from total destruction, on Sunday last, the entire quarter destroyed by fire in 1845.

But the high wind which prevailed blowing in a contrary direction, a considerable portion of the St. Roch suburb, also built of wood, had escaped the disaster of 1845. And since that period an entire town had been built in wood, beyond the Quebec city limits, and in a locality over which our municipal authorities could exercise no control.

On Sunday last, at about half-past four o'clock in the morning, fire broke out on the west side of Crown street, at the limit of the quarter whence proceeded the conflagration of 1845, destroying all that lay before it to the westward of the same street, for a length of over a mile, and covering a width of about half a mile. The easterly wind blowing a furious hurricane, carried the fire in every direction with desolating rapidity, and hurling to great distances the burning materials, multiplied the centres of destruction to such a degree as to baffle every expedient, and render futile all efforts to stay the terrible ravages of the destroying element.

The military authorities, and the men of H. M. S. *Aurora*, lent, under the circumstances, to the municipal body, all the assistance within their power, and many times even risked their lives in the effort to save property; to them we owe, in a great measure, that we have not to deplore a still greater disaster.

In a great number of localities blowing up with powder was had recourse to, in the hope, by creating wide breaches, to isolate and circumscribe the fire, but without success, for the flames did their work of ruin with the impetuosity of a torrent, bounding from place to place as if to avoid all obstacles and overleap distance.

Almost 2,500 dwellings were thus reduced to ashes in a little less than twelve hours, and from FIFTEEN TO EIGHTEEN THOUSAND PERSONS, at the approach of a rigorous winter, left without food, without clothing, and without shelter. Many, even, perished in the flames, whose calcined skeletons were rescued from the smoking ruins after the day's destruction was over.

The heart bleeds at the sight of so much desolation, and of so many thousand unfortunates clamouring for bread, shelter and warmth.

On the night following the disaster, the municipal authorities caused food to be distributed, and, on the day following, the citizens met under the presidency of the Mayor, to organize relief. About \$30,000 have already been subscribed among our citizens, and the subscription is still going on; and even some distant localities have, with spontaneous generosity, already sent us their assistance. But how insufficient will this be to cover losses which do not fall far short of \$2,000,000!

The law which, within the city limits, compels these sufferers to rebuild with incombustible materials, will be for them equivalent to a forced expropriation, unless we can assist them, to a certain degree, in complying with its terms.

To the generous hearted of all countries, then, we direct our appeal, and in the recollection of the compassion bestowed upon us in 1845, we place our hopes to be enabled to surmount the appalling misfortune of 1866.

For the present the sufferers find refuge in the surrounding parishes, and in the public buildings, where food is distributed daily by the Relief Committee.

If, as already narrated, some among them have perished in the conflagration, how many others must succumb to the rigours of the Canadian winter, or to those diseases which develop themselves and often propagate in a terrible manner in large and crowded agglomerations of human beings? Some of the places in which they are sheltered are now so overcrowded as to endanger alike morality and existence.

In a month hence our city will be covered with the snows of a long winter, and terrible as was the scourge of 1845, from that fact alone, it was less calamitous than the conflagration which, on Sunday last, threw over our city so much mourning and desolation.

For these reasons, then, we humbly crave permission to appeal to you in our distress, and to implore your sympathy and your generous contributions towards the relief of our unutterable misfortune.

Quebec, 19th. October, 1866.

JOSEPH CAUCHON, Mayor of Quebec.

+ C. F. EVEQUE DE TLOA, Administrator of the Archdiocese.

J. W. QUEBEC.

J. DUVAL, Chief Justice Q. B. L. C.

U. J. TESSIER, Speaker L. C.; Canada.

W. C. MEREDITH, Chief Justice S. C. L. C.

C. F. CAZEAU, Vicaire Generale.

JOHN COOK, D. D., Minister of St. Andrew's Church.

GEORGE V. HOUSEMAN, M. A., Rector of Quebec.

On behalf of the Executive Committee.